The CAPE BRETON GIANT

by JAMES D. GILLIS
AUTHOR

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THE
CAPE BRETON GIANT

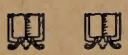
A TRUTHFUL MEMOIR

By JAS. D. GILLIS

Author of
"CANADIAN GRAMMAR"
"GREAT ELECTION"

This Book is Dedicated
To My Friend
JOHN M. MACLEAN
of Scotsville

Gentlemen of More than Ordinary Merit



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A BRIEF SKETCH

The author thinks it proper to give a sketch, a brief one, of his own life, by way of introduction to those of his readers with whom he has not the honor of being acquainted.

I was born on July 11th, 1870, at Strathlorne, not far from the residence of John MacIsaac, Donald's son.

In early childhood I removed, or more correctly was removed, to Upper Margaree. I went to school some there, and later on became proficient enough to teach school. By the way, my teachers were Jane Gillis, D. M. MacFarlane, Maggie H. Gillis, Malcolm H. Gillis, James MacFarlane, Flora M. Gillis, Archibald D. MacFarlane, Dan MacPhail and A. S. MacDougall.

I was twice to the United States; I do not say so for the sake of boast.

I am at present engaged in school-teaching in Kiltarlity school.

PREFACE

By their Biographies.

The celebrites of other lands are daily brought before our eyes. This is well, for it is pleasant, recreative and beneficial to know and to study the lives of great men. The poet Longfellow says:—

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime;
And departing leave behind us
Foot prints on the sands of time."

Longfellow is right. Experience is an able teacher moreover, and we can actually derive benefit from the story of the experiences of great men, that is, from the story of the ways and means by which the great overcame difficulties, and acquired fortune and fame and attained to eminence.

Plutarch said: "To be ignorant of the lives of the most celebrated men of antiquity is to continue in a state of childhood all our days."

Now, dear reader, is it not proper to perpetuate the fame of a deserving country?

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself has said:
This is my own, my native land,
Whose heart had ne'er within him burned
As home his footsteps he has turned?"

Cape Bretonians, one and all, remember that Angus MacAskill was our countryman. Remember that we have reason to be proud of him. Remember that he was one of the greatest giants the world has ever seen. Yes, one of the giants of the world was a native of Cape Breton.

But apart from our hero's bodily strength—he was also an excellent man otherwise. The following stanza is suggestive of his general personal character:

"True worth is in being, not seeming;
In doing each day that goes by
Some little good—not in the dreaming
Of great things to do by and by,
For whatever may be said in blindness
and in spite of fancies of youth,
There's nothing so kingly as kindness,
And nothing so royal as truth."

The writing of this work was suggested by Murdoch MacLean, of Upper East Ainslie. The author had seen an article in the "Family Herald and Weekly Star" about Angus MacAskill. In a colloquy which this suggested, Mr. MacLean said, "it would be a grand idea to write a life of MacAskill." The Author soon took up the matter, and this book is the result.

The author desires to thank the following people for their help:—

Kenneth P. MacKay, Rear Scotsville; Duncan MacAskill, St. Ann's; John A. Morrison, S. Gut, St. Ann's; Alick MacKinnon, North Ainslie; John P. MacKay, Scotsville; Hugh Gillis, Warden, Upper Margaree; John H. MacPhail, Upper E. Ainslie.

He also desires to thank Murdoch C. MacLean of North Ainslie, for suggestions.

Respectfully,

James D. Gillis,
Teacher.

INTRODUCTION.

There is not a settlement in the Dominion of Canada, or in the United States, that is not aware of the fact that there once lived a man by the name of Angus MacAskill, who was a prodigy of size and strength. This general idea, my friends, is not enough; it is rather vague to be satisfactory. True, it is that in some settlements a story or two may be heard, but again, this is not enough.

Now this book gives all the important events of MacAskill's career in language, which, if sometimes florid, is none the less easily understood by all who are fairly versed in the language of England.

The reader may have heard different or deviating versions of some of the exploit ancedotes here furnished. She or he may perhaps doubt the authenticity of this book, but the author is satisfied that this work is virtually a superb representative of MacAskill's greatness.

The author's researches for information were thorough. Now he ventures to say that a few readings of this life and exploits of Angus MacAskill is emphatically enough to enable any person to grasp a non-shadowy conception of the hero. Moreover, he believes that these readings will be pleasurable, recreative, very instructive, and practically beneficial.

As an "inspiring volume," it will possibly be of benefit to old and young. The language being easy as already stated, no one need fail to derive morals from the life of MacAskill, which may permanently profit.

Geographical descriptions are profusely given. These are almost essential. Old and later day history further illuminates the reader's path to the knowledge he seeks, a thorough knowledge of the Cape Breton Giant.

The fact that, as a rule, only one exploit is portrayed in each chapter makes the reading of this book far from tiresome. The memory is not overtaxed, and at the close thereof "all draw long breaths and hope that another rapid is near." The above quotation is from the illustrious writer, Principal Grant. It is used in a metonymical sense, of course.

The author is confident that it will be found more interesting than a fairy tale. He has devoted some time to the work, having commenced it in the winter of 1898 at Upper East Ainslie.

Applicable quotations sparkle here and there, and where convenient are credited to their authors.

CHAPTER I.

Birth Place of MacAskill.

On the west coast of Scotland is a cluster of islands, called the Hebrides, about five hundred in number, of which one hundred are inhabited. Some of the islands have high mountains, and are noted for their picturesque scenery. The climate is mild and humid The Hebrides are divided by an arm of the sea called the Little Minch into the Inner Hebrides and the Outer Hebrides.

The inner group lies close to the west of Scotland. The principal islands which constitute the group are: Skye, Mull, Jura, Islay, Arran, Bute and Staffa. The later is a small island on the west of Mull, and is remarkable for its basaltic columns, and for Fingal's cave.

Fingal's cave, to the Irish and Scotch people, how musical the name! for it recalls to memory what we have learned of the great Fingal, an illustrious king of a part of Scotland in the days of antiquity. Yes, and reminds us of King Fingal's gifted son Ossian the poet. It reminds us of his other sons, Gall, Connan and Oscar, also "famous in story." Fingal and his sons, in their own way, were like bonny Marshall Ney of France, "the bravest of the brave," and we have reason to conclude that they were likewise reputed the greatest of the great. They were generous, chivalrous and brave.

Ossian's poetic narration of his visit to Erin or Ireland cannot be excelled. Ossian was romantic. The maids of Scotland were beautiful and charming, yet none of them approached to Ossian's ideal of womenkind. Fingal saw and smiled and said "my son, go to Ireland, there is many a lovely maiden there, and I believe you will see one at least there who will more than captivate your youthful heart." Ossian went. He arrived at the palace of an Irish King, where he got a hospitable reception. It chanced that on that very day, this King's daughter, the fairest maid of Erin, was to be given in marriage to the best

duelist. The arms used were a shield and spear. Ossian won the day though there were several competitors, and this princess gave him her hand with her heart in it, and his joy on that day he remembered till his dying day.

It must not be omitted that, previous to the duel or contest of spears, the heroes were permitted to get a glimpse of the lovely princess. Ossian was so enamoured by her beauty that he was willing, were it possible, to die for her hand ten thousand times.

However, he returned to Scotland soon after accompanied by his wife. They lived in bliss for many a year, but cruel Death at length robbed him of his darling "Evir Aluinn."

Iona contains the ruins of a monastery, a famed seat of learning, where Calum Cile, otherwise known as St. Columbia, presided and taught in the days of "lang syne." Eigg is famed for the cave of Frances in which all the inhabitants of the island were smoked to death by a hostile clan.

The outer group of the Hebrides comprises Lewis, North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist, Barra, and numerous smaller islands. They are separated by narrow passages, and extend in a line of about one hundred and twenty miles in length. The total population of the Hebrides is 100,000— (See J. B. Calkin's Gen. Geography.)

The South-west part of Lewis is called Harris— Here our illustrious hero, Angus MacAskill was born. As an infant, he was, as said elsewhere, but of average size and nobody dreamt of the bustle his future prodigious size and appalling strength were to occasion throughout the whole world, civilized and uncivilized, (from pole to pole.)

But, reverting to Harris, be it said that it has produced many eminent men, and forefathers of eminent men, and though many of them "were born to blush unseen" and to "waste their sweetness on the desert air," yet, generally speaking, the Harrissonians and their descendants of other climes rank high.

Angus MacAskill was born in the year 1825. His parents were respectable, and of "blood unstained and lineage good."

His father was 5 ft. 9 in. in height, and stout. His mother was a good sized woman. There was a family of twelve besides him, three girls and nine boys. There were two girls and a boy older than he. Four of his brothers and two of his sisters are still living. Some of the family died in infancy.

CHAPTER II.

Cape Breton As It Is.

Cape Breton Island is to the north-west of the peninsula of Nova Scotia. It is divided into four counties, namely: Inverness, Victoria, Cape Breton and Richmond.

Cape Breton Island is remarkable for its beautiful scenery. Good harbors are plentiful. It has a plentitude of good highways and some railways. Of the latter kind of accommodation, many more are talked about, and the expectations of those interested may be gratified all in good time. The soil is generally fertile, and is extensively cultivated. The fisheries on and off the coast waters are famous. The Bras d'Or lakes and some fresh water lakes, as Ainslie, are simply enchanting. Into the later flows Trout River—a favorite resort of trout. From Lake Ainslie flows the South-West of Margaree River, a river, though fairly large, still unassuming, a river whose intrinsic loveliness, coupled with still more charming surroundings, has a prominent place in the directory of superb phenomena. Reverting to Lake Ainslie, it is sufficient to say that a great writer has successfully demonstrated that it is equal in beauty to the paragons of such beauties, viz., the Killarney Lakes of Ireland. Again, Middle River, Harvard Lakes, North-East Margaree, Cheticamp, Broad Cove, Mabou, Port Hood, Judique, Nyanza, Baddeck, Whycocomagh the Sydneys, East Bay, Mira, Arichat, St. Peters, and St. Ann's possess panoramas of scenic magnificence universally supposed to be unrivalled beyond our shores.

The island is entering a "career of brilliant promise." The exodus to other parts is decreasing. The flow of our boys and girls to the United States will probably cease forever at no distant day. The average Cape Bretonian is a George Washington in the line of truthfulness. But that Dingley Bill of the Americans indirectly contributes to Cape Breton's coffers. The resources of our island are many. It invariably pays to develop them. Many, many reasons could be adduced to prove that it is far better for the Cape Bretonians to stay at home than to go abroad, and of late years experience has confirmed the majority and more than those who have been fortunate enough to gain a foothold in Cape Breton Island cannot leave it for a better land upon this revolving star that we inhabit.

Before "you and I were young." Cape Breton Island belonged to France. Vivacious France was "quick to learn and wise to know" the great value of Isle Royal, as they called Cape Breton. They built a town on the east coast, fortified "to kill," and called it Louisburg in honor of the then King Louis of France.

Louisburg's fortifications were not kept in good repair. In 1745 A.D., it was taken by a small fleet from Great Britain and an army of New Englanders. France was bereft of Isle Royal. Afterwards it was ceded to France. Again, in 1758, however, Louisburg was finally captured by Great Britain. The bon Isle Royal was ceded forever to Great Britain in 1763 A. D.

Fom 1784 to 1819 A. D. the island formed a separate province, under military Government.

While a military Government would not be adequate today, it is clear it would be much better for the island to be still and forever, a separate, province. With due respect to the inhabitants of the peninsula, we are satisfied that it adds nothing to our dignity at home or abroad to be affiliated with them under one provincial Government. As for roads and bridge grants, etc., there is a "leagued oppression" against Cape Breton in these matters, which needs no Argus to observe. However, there is a sentiment among the islanders in favor of secession. At a seasonable oppor-

tunity a "long, strong pull together" will gain for us that separation which will be the keystone to our political freedom.

In closing this chapter, it may be remarked that, as the climate of our island is grant that it is reasonable to suppose that MacAskill, the hero of our tale owed some of his size and strength to his being bred here for the most part. Yes, our island is exceptionally conductive to the growth of humanity. A visit to us will convince anyone of this. While we admit that our hero was by far the greatest of all, the average Cape Bretonian is little less than a giant, comparatively speaking. But the debts we owe our land we shall remember, our gratitude our land esteems full high, hence, while Cape Breton exists, she will reverberate with praise of her sons and the realm of size and strength vaunt our hero to the very skies. Such, such will Cape Breton show her love of him who loved her well.

CHAPTER III.

MacAskill Comes Across.

When MacAskill was a youth, the subject of immigration to America was pervaded with great and sometimes unrealized expectations. Of course, truth is stranger than fiction, and a truthful account of America could not be exceeded in wonders and interest by the most fabulous writer orator. Yet, there is no clime on earth where all succeed. Even America is not an exception, though it offers the poor exceptional chances. Hence it was that many immigrants even from Scotland were disappointed. But it is gratifying to know that the great majority who crossed the Atlantic's roar to the land of the setting sun might reasonably celebrate the day the thought of coming over flashed through their minds.

In those days America was the Boston, the Whycocomagh or the Klondike of to-day. News from America excited public interest to concert pitch. In truth, a vessel hailing from the New World would

occasion as lively a bustle as did the arrival of Sir Randolph Murray, with his "News of Battle," after the Battle of Flodden. As favorable reports were usually submitted, it is no marvel that many "took a leap and o'er the sea."

Moreover, the Scottish islands, as well as other parts of Europe, were becoming overcrowded. The resources of these countries were seldom equal to the demands made upon them. In many cases, in spite of economy, thrift and hard labor, "want even as an armed man came down upon their sheds."

It may not be irrelevant here to remark what incalculable gratitude the greater part of the civilized world owes Spain. Were it not for Spain, America might not have been yet discovered. True it is that Columbus was not a Spaniard, but it is equally true that it was Spain that furnished him the means to cross.

Say, reader, just think of the millions who have been indebted thus to Spain for fame, fortune and life itself. Fancy the thousands who, of recent years, came from Europe, combined with the millions whose forefathers came from there, yes, fancy them, packed, I may say, in Europe; who can picture the result? As long as an inhabitant of America appreciates elbow room and pure air, he or she is lacking some way if Spain is not recalled to memory with a flush of gratitude.

Yet there are some, but in the honest Dominion of Canada their ranks are wearing thinner, who would rejoice in the downfall of Spain. The same people would laud their own little idol of humanity to the skies—these little idols of theirs whose prominence falls like that of kites, and likewise would fall to be lost forever only for the tangent selfishness by which it is fastened to some unscrupulous hand.

It is of little interest to refer to that discovery of America by the Northmen. It was as best a slipshod affair, and resulted in songs which our ordinary people of this day could not understand.

As for Cabot and others, previous to Columbus' discovery, they had never dreamt of the roundness or roundity of the earth.

But our great benefactor, Columbus, studied physiography for years. At length he concluded that the earth was round. He set off westerly for East India. By the way, though confident in his conclusions about the earth's form, he was not aware that there was such a country as America. Yes, he set off for India, but better still, instead of discovering a shorter route to that land than the one then taken, he discovered the land of lands, America.

But enough. However, when Angus MacAskill was six years old he saw the ship that brought him o'er. Yes, he was but six years old when his parents led him by the hand to the ship. Though his parents were confident in the future, yet their hearts were almost bursting as they bade their friends a "heart-warm fond adieu." Angus shed tears, too. Next morning the ship left the harbour. When Angus realized that they were actually going to live out of sight of the old home, he cried bitterly. His parents consoled him as well as they could, but almost in vain.

However, as was customary, when the vessel proceeded out a piece, twelve violinists stood at the stern. Soothed by this sprightly air, Angus dried his tears. By and by, he pouted "I'll be a man yet, and may yet see my own, my native land," and he did see the country of his birth, which may be credited to some extent to his determined will.

This may possibly remind some of Napolen Bonaparte at the Bridge of Lodi. 'Twas at the Bridge of Lodi, during an exciting engagement with the Austrians, that the idea flashed through Napoleon Bonaparte's mind that he might yet be a great man.

However, after an otherwise uneventful voyage, Angus MacAskill arrived safely at St. Ann, Victoria County, Cape Breton Island.

CHAPTER IV.

From Upper Margaree to St. Ann's.

A journey from Upper Margaree to St. Ann's gives

pleasure, recreation and benefit. It can be more conveniently and profitably performed in summer or autumn.

Leaving Upper Margaree the tourist ascends to Egypt. Egypt is a fine settlement, physically and otherwise. It is fairly well adapted to farming.

Not far from Egypt is Piper's Glen, where a famous piper, Neil Jamieson, dwells. In regard to pipers and violinists, Cape Breton is not behind. Hector MacQuarrie of Loch Ban; John N. Jamieson, formerly of Broad Cove; a Mr. Beaton, of Mabou; the MacKinnons' pipers of bonny Lake Ainslie; Allan J. MacFarlane, Duncan Gillis, James Hugh Gillis, and the intellectual giant, Malcolm H. Gillis, of Upper Margaree, are pipers that would electrify the stoutest hearts in Scotland and the fairest ears as well.

Egypt plenteously abounds in crystal clear fountains. In summer, Egypt smiles with strawberries. Smiles enjoyed as far as Upper Margaree by the lovers of good living and by the romantic.

Between Egypt and Gilander's Mountain, Middle River, Victoria County, there is a defile through the forest for three miles duration. Over this road a buggy will roll and jolt with some safety, barring accidents. Shortly after emerging from the forests, the tourists sights Middle River, upon which he is apt to gaze "long and thoughtfully," as Napoleon Bonapart gazed on Moscow.

On Gilander's lives Donald A. MacDonald. His is a family whose friendship I will ever treasure They are pleasant and hospitable and their financial plentitude enables them to attest to their kindness in an enjoyable manner.

From MacDonald's to the river the distance is about three miles. The Presbyterian church here is a comely building.

Along the road you may telescope landscapes most beautiful and farms that may remind you of those of Ontario.

The river is "a silver thread" that attracts many trout and salmon sports. In its bed gold is found in modest quantities. Deeper search may reveal more of that ever-valued element.

The road soon slopes up Hunter's Mountain (called after Mr. John Hunter), and from the highest degree which the road describes you may behold combinations of scenery and contrasts, about which a Byron might compose a Lochnagar.

By and by you pass through Big Baddeck and over the bridge which is so lofty that you experience cold chills as you go across.

Along to Baddeck town the road is inlaid with spruce trees, hence, is rather monotoncus. Four miles travelled and you are in town.

Baddeck is a lovely town. There are many fine houses and several churches. The post-office would be a credit to a city.

Steamboats, etc., without number call at Baddeck.

Across the harbour may be seen the ghost or perhaps the skeleton of the ill fated "May Queen."

Baddeck people are exemplary. They are industrious, artistic and kind. Much and varied work and business is daily done. Money is plentiful. Loungers are few. In politics the voters are practical; decorum prevails.

With due respect to others, about Allan MacDonald, blacksmith. I hold that he and Mrs. MacDonald are individuals whose acquaintance is worth having. Mr. MacDonald is a violinist. Indeed, a visit to Allan MacDonald's is something which no one will ever think of without a thrill of joy.

From Baddeck to St. Ann's the miles number ten. The road is good. On the way you pass by an I. O. G. T. Lodge.

From Upper Margaree to St. Ann's the people along the road are good, always profuse in furnishing information or any other restorative the wayworn may require.

CHAPTER V.

St. Ann's.

In the eastern part of Victoria County, a few miles to the west of Great Bras d'Or, the tourist suddenly beholds a bay which is truly lovely. This is St.

Ann's Bay. It is over six miles in length, and has an average breadth of over a mile.

At the mouth of St. Ann's Bay, on the west side is the town, Englishtown. The people of Englishtown are remarkably progressive. Education receives due attention. In short, the success of Englishtown people is a vivid example of what can be achieved by patient study and continued labor.

Along the bay, for the most part, and on both sides, are excellent farms. The scenic beauty of these cozy farms ranges from the simple to the picturesque. A reasonable number and quantity of north temperature plants are grown. Well blooded horses are plentiful. Cows and calves add a lustre to their allotted villas, while in the lofty distance sturks, oxen, sheep, etc., can be seen in vast numbers.

Scores of sailing and steaming vessels plough the waters of St. Ann's every week. As these gigantic cradles gently rock, they resemble fabulous vultures of the deep in the act of sunning themselves and resting moreover before taking one of their long and happy flights.

There is a sufficiency of wharves. Not far from one of these is a saw-mill which would be no disgrace to a lumber company in New Brunswick. The rapidity of this mill in shingle sawing reminds one of marvelous tales reported about slight of hand.

The roads are pretty good. Iron bridges appear to be very fashionable, for brooks of very ordinary pretentions babble the "go on forever" boast:—They've bridged me o'er with iron.

The southern end of the main bay is extended by a creek. The neck between this superfluous head and the bay is designated South Gut.

Into the west side of St. Ann's Bay rolls the lordly North River. The river flows through a fertile region. Yes, the farmers of North River need but "tickle the ground, and it smiles with a harvest." Again, North River hay, pressed or otherwise, has more than local reputation.

But, reverting to St. Ann's, the people are agreeable cheerful and hospitable. Young and old seem

to be exceptionally robust. As a rule, the people are good looking. To "treat extensively" upon this might be indiscreet, for two reasons which need not be told.

Three churches, magnificent buildings, emphatically testify to the "applied Christianity" of the place. One of these buildings is elsewhere mentioned. The religion is Presbyterianism.

There are several I. O. G. T. Lodges. The object of those ladies and gentlemen who meet here is to suppress intemperance.

The school sections are large and populous. Good work, and plenty of it, is being done in the schools. The chief occupations of St. Ann's people are farming fishing, navigating and lumbering. Farming heads the list in lucrative importance, the others follow as above respectively in order of descending magnitude of profit.

In these industries there is a gradual but steady improvement. New blood and new capital is occasionally introduced. Equanimity prevails, and it is reasonable to suppose that St. Ann's will yet vie with historic places of eminence.

The home of St. Ann's might remind the tourist of Mrs. Heman's poetic tribute to the lovely "homes of England." The exteriors of these (the former) are only excelled by their interiors. Clumps of flowery flower-plants are seen in discreet profusion mildly blooming outside the inviting open doors of these palatial cottages, as if the florid sources of varied sweetness within "had run o'er", as the gold of Venice seemed, to Rogers, yes, "had run o'er," which necessitated the removal of the plant inhabitants outside the music resounding walls.

The fisheries off St. Ann's are far-famed. Fishing is quite a significant source of wealth. Formerly however, United States traders came up the bay to purchase bait, and paid a high price therefor. Directly this filled the coffers of St. Ann's men; but indirectly reckoning, 'tis better for St. Ann's, like other parts of the Dominion of Canada, to deal with others in preference to United States people. To-day, and no

one regrets it, the United States flag is seldom seen in the bay.

One reason for the collapse of United States trade here was the fact that our laws obliged the Americans to buy licenses ere proceeding to trade with us. This they thought rather oppressive, hence exit, and no one sings.

"Will ye no come back again,"

Many of St. Ann's young men "take a loup (leap) and o'er the sea." They are smart on the sea, and their promotion is usually rapid. They are regularly well paid, and later in life these mariners generally settle on a farm or else open a store or a kindred industry.

In winter the forests resounds with perpetual reports of the axe. Beech, birch, maple, ash, elm, spruce, fir, hemlock, juniper and pine are here in abundance. In due time the yarded lumber is con veyed to the whistling and ever-hungary circular saws Many jolly crowds are engaged in the varied employments which these illusions suggest.

St. Ann's has moreover a plentiful store of gypsum better known as "plaster Paris." This mineral, when thoroughly utilized, will prove its great value in several different phases.

In fact, St. Ann's is a country which no one would desire to leave. A description thereof that would do justice thereto would occupy a volume. True, this country has a few faults and drawbacks, but those weigh but very little against the merits which preponderate overwhelmingly.

The merchants are a fine set of men. They buy and sell fairly, and have discarded the credit system long ago; but liberally assist a customer or a stranger on credit, if it lies in their financial power, when a special emergency justifies the concession.

There are justices of the peace, lawyers, and medical doctors. The land is so peaceful and healthful that these men have little or nothing to do; such is St. Ann's.

CHAPTER VI.

MacAskill's Appearance, Size, etc.

In appearance Angus MacAskill was prepossessing. His eyes and countenance bespoke a stern and shrewd mind tempered with kindness.

His height was seven and three-fourth feet. He was three feet and eight inches across the shoulders. The palm of his hand was six inches wide and twelve inches long. One of his boots at least is still extant, and is eighteen inches long. A coat and vest of his are to be seen in Boston, Mass., and the vest can be comfortably buttoned over two good sized men. Though his face was becomingly plump, he was never fat. Touching on his face it is interesting to know that it was positively beardless. Hence he was never obliged to patronize the consolations of the barber's chair except for a hair cut or a shampoo. His eyes were blue and deep set. His voice, though musical, was somewhat hollow, owing to his massive wind organism. The reader may gain a faint idea of his resonant voice by getting a friend to sit in an empty puncheon and speak. He weighed over 500 pounds. He was affable, courteous and friendly. His hospitality was famous. His character strongly reminded people of Goldsmith's lines in praise of his father. He frequently visited his friends.

Like all good and great men, he had enemies and opponents, but, as he always trod the path of virtue in addition to his strength, his enemies and opponents never got the upper hand literally, financially or pugilistically, or generally speaking in any way. Yet he never risked the extention of his lines by trying too many things.

He was in religion a Presbyterian. At the age of twenty his knowledge of the Bible was extensive. Sundays, or Sabbaths as the reader may choose to call these days of rest and devotion, he carefully observed. A Mr. Campbell, writing from Riverside, California, for the Montreal "Star," says in addition to other information about MacAskill: "He conducted

meetings in his own (MacAskill's) house on Sunday." This not only attests to his knowledge of Scripture it proves that he endeavoured to conform his life to the truths condescended to happy men on the inspired pages.

He seldom went to any church save the one of his own parish, not even to a Presbyterian church, because his presence was liable to draw the attention of the congregation too much. This was his reason. He clearly saw the danger and governed himself accordingly. But this was probably excessive modesty, or modesty a little misdirected. 'Twere better for him to attend.

It may be superfluous to say that he was not a bigot. No, far from it. Though firmly attached to his own religious belief, he treated the expression of different religious opinions with cautious gravity and invariable leniency.

Such, such was Angus MacAskill, a man whose size, strength, kindness, virtues, and exploits will be long remembered. In his own realm of greatness he was the Bonnie Charlie, the Wallace, the Bruce, the Napoleon Bonaparte, the Marshall Ney, the Wellington, the Nelson, the O'Connell, the Robert Burns or the Washington of his countless friends, according as they happened to be impressed by the different phases of his greatness.

Even to-day in Cape Breton, and in many another land, the mere mention of St. Ann's Big Boy creates a sensation. But while we rejoice at the greatness of our hero, let us not forget the unremitting loyalty of Cape Breton to her sons and daughters. She never "warps or swerves or stirs" from what she thought or spoke of them, and when they leave her like wanton birds, who paint aloft upon her flag the modest welcome, come what may:—"Will ye na come back again."

Yes, hundreds of eminent people yearly vie with one another in sounding the praises of the Cape Bretonians. It is gratifying to reflect upon the fact that our reputation is often the subject of friendly discussions within the "merry homes of England."

These remarks, far from deducting from our hero's claim to what we call immortal fame, make his claim so much the stronger, for such a people would not care to "throw up their bonnets" for one not highly worthy of such an inestimable tribute.

CHAPTER VII.

MacAskill's Ancestors.

At this stage of our hero's life and exploits, it is both reasonable and natural that the reader will be curious to know something of his ancestors. Were there any giants among them? It has been said already that his father was but of moderate size, and that his mother was a good sized woman. But the reader before proceeding with this phase, a few remarks on heredity may not be inappropriate.

Nature works in mysterious ways. A child may bear a striking facial resemblance to his father, while his limbs may resemble those of his maternal grandfather. Again a man may not resemble his father a visible iota, and his son may be the picture of his paternal grandfather. But in the case of such a man the points of resemblance were there, though not evinced. Moreover, a man may be found to be almost a duplicate of a great grand uncle. Yet, as a rule, and as a rule a salutary thing it is, children are ideal images of their parents. And though "Auld Nature" wantonly as if by accident deviates occasionally from her rule far enough to use anew the moulds in which our remote ancestors were moulded, it rather strengthens than weakens the belief that Nature intended us all to be and to look a little or more like one another, and like Adam and Eve. This phenomenom of Nature is called heredity.

In our hero's paternal ancestral line, if we go back several generations, yes, several centuries, we will find another giant (a MacAskill) whose prowess was almost equally great. With said exception, our hero's ancestry were people of average size.

Now it is possible that that MacAskill line may yet startle the world by producing another herculean specimen of humanity.

But in the case of our hero, Angus MacAskill, climatic influences the most favorable, as elsewhere suggested, and other circumstances possibly were powerful auxiliaries of Nature in building his stupendous body and in its thorough development.

It may be remarked that as a baby he was so small that no one expected him to live. As time passed he began to grow, and grow in earnest.

After the age of eight years until he arrived at maturity he always ate a bowl of palatable mixture of cream and oatmeal, sometimes called crowdie, after each meal.

Such a dessert might seem crude and unattractive to some, yet it was good and mention thereof may serve to show the wisdom of substantial diet; it slams the door on the dwarf's nose in the days of growth.

How sweet to see our hero, doffing his bonnet to enjoy his modest but superb repast. And who would dare to scoff.

CHAPTER VIII.

MacAskill Used Tobacco.

Those who do not use tobacco cannot be blamed though they condemn the tobacco habit. Of course there are some who do not touch tobacco, who care little or nothing whether others smoke, chew, snuff or not. Others are readily sickened by tobacco fumes. To these, passing swiftly through a smoking car is an ordeal which they would not like to repeat. This respect is one of the many in which variations of or differing constitutions are expressed. What is one man's medicine is another man's poison, though not a well underpinned principle bears the winds of time fairly well, and the researches made by the moderns reveal that it will rock there yet for quite a while.

The above mentioned maxim (did I say principle?) has been well illustrated in one of the foreign regions somewhere. A certain lad, a soldier, decided to try his fortunes as a doctor. He did not go to college or to a university, but he just bought a valise of medicine and a few implements. He has R.R.R., G. G.G. Hood's Sarsparilla, Ayer's Cherry Pectoral etc. Thus equipped he joined another division of the army and enlisted as a doctor. His first patient was a Dutchman down with a raging fever. Give me "sour krout" shouted the poor Dutchman. The doctor (so-called) got his patient the cabbage soup. The dutchman swallowed his fill, and soon recovered. The doctor wrote in his professional diary. "Sour krout cures fever." Next morning he was called to attend a Prussian, who was all but gone with the fever. The doctor gave him sour krout, and in five minutes the Prussian was dead. The aristocratic Prussian constitution was ruined by sour krout. The doctor wrote in his diary as follows:—Sour krout heals a Dutchman's fever; but it is a Prussian's coup de grace (or finishing stroke.)

Now a medicine, drug, or ever a narcotic, may suit one person better than his twin brother. Some who receive a charge of ether never recover in perfection. There are others who experience no evil consequences.

But is tobacco a failure? Thousands answer "Yes" and hundreds answer "no". That tobacco users are in the minority is no argument against its use. Medical knowledge or science cautiously advises the world to avoid tobacco. Said science teaches that a moderate dose of smoke or an occasional chew or a frequent shot of snuff has no ill consequences of a very material nature. But here, as in many other things, people are in danger of overstepping moderation, and, moreover, tobacco, like strong drink, usually causes a greater appetite for what? for more of itself. If too much tobacco be taken, it impairs or injures the mind and the body, makes a person bad looking, clumsy and weak. If you once begin, it is, you may say, impossible to discontinue the tobacco habit. In fighting with your inclinations, you are but one

against two. First, force of habit is against you; secondly, you have the insidious craving for the weed, which is a more bitter enemy than the first. Don't begin to use tobacco; no don't touch it if you mean to stop using it some other day. It is a pungent, that is, a bad smelling weed, too, as it does no good that is, as it is usually taken, why not leave it alone? Of course applied to cuts or snake bites, etc., it is a valuable medicine.

However, it is well to make known that our hero used tobacco. He was "barely yet apast his teens" when he acquired the habit. In those times, smoking was somewhat fashionable, and, of course, MacAskill could afford to smoke as well as his mates.

One of his pipes is still extant, and it is a marvel of size. It is cherry wood, one of the limbs serving the function of stem. Possibly it was made on a colossial scale merely for merriment, not for the sake of logical proportion. It will hold one-sixth of a pound of tobacco at a time, and resembles a mallet in the distance.

But to be serious, tobacco had no ill effects on MacAskill's body. He was so robust and able that it would take tobacco half a century to make the least impression on him. Should his supply get exhausted he did not care very much, for he could control his craving till it was convenient to have his orders sent.

CHAPTER IX.

MacAskill Would Take a Glass.

The folly of drinking intoxicating liquors has been often and conclusively proved. The arguments advanced in favor of strong drink are all very shadowy. But against strong drink scores of able arguments can be adduced, and this without great study or research. At this day no self-respecting person bothers with tangle-foot at all.

But in former years, say, thirty or forty years ago, it was not known that alcoholic liquors were so pernicious. It remained for the present studious, laborious and researching generation to discover the danger. Rum, etc., injures a person morally, physically, mentally and financially. This being admitted, why would anyone drink strong drink? The author of this book ventures to answer that question. It is because rum, etc., so to speak, creates cheerfulness and happiness. But dear reader, this cheerfulness and this happiness are merely counterfeits, yes, merely delusions. One smile is more beneficial to a sober person than a peal of laughter to the man who is "pretty full." Again, after the direct effects of a glass or more of rum, etc., are over, there is a reaction. The man is dull and sad—these are penalties which he must pay for the folly of drinking alcoholic drinks. Really now, there is no pleasure in rum, etc., drinking; it does not heat you in cold weather, except in your imagination; hence, I ask again, why drink the hateful liquor at all?

But, as already suggested some years ago the evil resultants of alocholic drinks had not been discovered. This serves as an ample apology for those who drank them. No further apology is needed for anyone. Another helping or auxiliary apology is the fact that the intoxicating drinks for sale then were not adulterated. They were not additionally poisoned with soda, tobacco, etc., etc.

Angus MacAskill took a glass of rum, brandy or

whiskey occasionally. Did I say glass? Well, twas a mistake. He used to drink out of a wooden dish called a tub. The tub would hold three glasses.

However, ordinarily speaking, strong drink did not hurt Angus MacAskill, i. e., to any apparent extent. He was so healthy and strong that a few drinks a week did not injure him.

No one will dream of disrespecting the memory of Angus MacAskill on account of the knowledge that he drank strong liquors. No! No! Drinking was customary in his day, and as aforesaid it was supposed to be harmless. In fact, drinking was thought to be a semi-elixir which would make perfect health better and cure every ailment peculiar to the age.

About rum, etc.—our hero was no niggard in a liquor store. He'd call for a drink for all hands as soon as he'd enter, no matter whether the crowd was large or small.

He did not sell strong liquor himself, but often had some in his store for private use. Any customer whom he knew to be fond of the "drop", would get a hearty swallow, and then in the din of funny yarns broken only by laughter, he'd drink a "shot" himself.

Had our hero been of the present day, we may be sure that he'd be an advocate of total abstinence. However, be it said that drinking never excited him to any visible extent, and that he never drank to intoxication.

CHAPTER X.

MacAskill Could Farm.

In his early years, except fishing, no work pleased our hero more than farming. He could plough, harrow, and in short, was an adept at all those duties peculiar to the farm. He was an expert plowman. This is interesting to the farmer reader, for he knows that ploughing is one thing and ploughing admirably well another. Our hero became versed in the science and art of ploughing at a very early age. He was carefully trained to it by his father, who always tried

to have the following momentous principle practically applied:—What's worth doing at all is worth doing well.

His father taught him the wisdom of having one general principle in all doings instead of trying to follow many rules. His father often demonstrated that, if men do their duty to the best of their judgment power and strength, it matters little whether the motives are selfish or not. He showed that there is no antagonism between doings that are really good; in fine, that what is really and positively good is good and cannot be bad: yes, that that what is good for one man is good for all, directly or indirectly. Moreover, he held that nothing approximates the expression of the above principles as near as the golden rule, to wit: "Do to others as you would have others do to you." Such was the philosophic general instruction imparted to our hero, to which he largely owed "that prudent, cautious self control which is wisdom's root." Wonder not that the son of such a parent was morally and generally a whole man.

He loved his mother too deep and too much for words. Nothing pained him so much as to see her sad. He spared no pains for her comfort. Her word was law to him, and he never persisted in anything of which she disapproved.

One instance will serve to prove this quite emphatically. He and his father were out ploughing one afternoon. A neighbor came around, and in the course of a colloquy with our hero, bet ten dollars that the field would not be finished that evening. Our hero put up ten dollars, too, and the neighbor went off till a later hour. Soon, however, one of the horses got sick, and had to be unyoked for that day, where upon MacAskill stepped into the horse's place, took hold of the traces, and was fairly more than a match for the remaining horse. He filled the sick horse's place successfully for two hours.

At four o'clock his mother came out with a luncheon. She was astounded. In fact she wept. She prayed her son to cease such work at once, and never to do the like again. Without a word of explanation our hero begged her pardon, which was

readily granted. Luncheon over, he walked home and smoked for a while. Then he pocketed ten dollars out of his safe, and payed the bet. Were it not for his mother's interference, he would have won the bet, but rather than hurt his mother's feelings he let his money go.

'Twas months afterwards that his mother heard of the wager. She was sorry, yet she was satisfied that she did right to interpose. The good lady was right, for,

A pebble on the streamlet scant
Has turned the course of many a river:
A dewdrop on the plant
Has warped the giant oak forever.

Hence her interposing probably stayed him for these happy years at least from indiscreet undertakings which might end disastrously. "A man's a man for all that," no matter how great his strength, and labours usually assigned to engines or beasts of burden are too heavy for the strongest man, at least if continued,and are moreover a little undignifying.

Years afterwards he said: my mother's counsel on that occasion cost me ten dollars, but to me it was worth a thousand.

Let all mothers who read this endeavour to train their sons to refrain from indiscreet undertakings. Thus, they'll confer a favour on all humanity, for in a breat measure, as Napoleon Bonaparte said, "the cradle rules the world."

CHAPTER XI.

He Surprises His Father.

When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And round the world away,—
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every man his day."

Though by no means a vain minded person, our hero's chief pastime, in his early days, was the performing of feats which might startle veteran circus spectators. But in his case the feats were real, and devoid of all trickery, jugglery and sleight of hand.

He was a giant by nature. He never attended a gymnasium. We can barely imagine the result had science and art been brought to bear on the developing of his strength.

At the age of fourteen he was known as St. Ann's Big Boy. He moved slowly, and had nothing to do with other boys of the same age as long as he had more mature company. This was not owing to precocity, but because these contemporaries of his, possibly through jealousy, were wont to tease him about his great size and his slowly gait. When, however our hero showed signs of anger, they took to their heels.

As above intimated, he was not precocious. At this age, though big, his mind was boyish. He enjoyed his own innocent sports with as much zest as other youths enjoyed theirs.

Touching on precocity in children and young people, nothing is more ridiculous. It is invariably the fault of the parents, guardians and teachers. Those who instruct children and young people surely ought to know that, if it were better for the young to think and act like mature people, that they would be instinctively inclined to do so, and competent, too, of themselves alone. Parents and others cannot give laws to Nature, but they should carefully co-operate with Nature. They should allow children to indulge in childish pastimes. In fact, parents, guardians and teachers ought to encourage in those under their jurisdiction such studies, plays and labours as are only suitable for the young. The great majority of the world's celebrated women and men did not think or act like grown up people until they passed their teens.

Reason, common sense and history combine to prove that precocity is a great danger, or, at best, an utter failure, for it places the youth in the embarrassing situation of the "daw in borrowed feathers."

About the first time he showed his great strength was when he was sixteen. In those pioneer days boards were sawn by the whip-saw; the logs were placed on what was called a pit seven or eight feet from the ground, and it took a good deal of strength to put up the logs. Our hero and his father were one day sawing boards in this primitive way. For once in their lives, the two disagreed about something. The dinner conch sounded as they had just got a heavy log on the pit. His father went to dinner, but our hero did not go. When his father returned, the log was laying on the ground, whereupon he accused his son of gathering neighbors to help him in doing mischief. Our hero then seized the log and threw it up on the pit as if it were a little block.

He then said to his father, "we have quarrelled a little, but I am sorry. As it was our first quarrel, let it be our last. But in a manner I am glad that it was you, for, if it were many a man, the possibilities are that I'd relieve him of his head with one clip of my hand." He extended his hand to his father. They shook hands in silence, and they never had a cross word again.

Indeed, he loved his parents dearly. Filial love, yes, exceptional filial love, always merits admiration. Most great men of ancient and modern times loved their parents or their guardians, as the case might be, to a degree almost incredible. Angus MacAskill was not an exception. Nothing that he could do for his parents comfort or welfare was left undone, and woe to him whether friend or foe who would insult them when he was near. In this he has left the young people an example by which they can benefit, and, as one laudable thought or deed breeds another, and so on, that example may be the means whereby some may rise step by step to a position where they can take advantage of "that tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune."

CHAPTER XII.

He Loses a Friend, But no Enmity.

Some of the exploits of Angus MacAskill, like those of some of the celebrities in other walks of life, savour of the curious; one of these is sufficient. Were many of these given the author would possibly suffer the odium of being classed among the liars of the age. However, some of these reflect a ray on our hero which would lead one to suspect him of want of sense or of virtue.

Here is a word picture of the exploit suggested:—

One day our hero and a freiend of his set off afoot on a journey of thirty miles or so. They arrived at their destination, and, having discharged their errand, they resolved to return home that evening. They directed their steps homeward, and all "went merry as a marriage bell" till about dusk, when a tempestuous thunder storm rolled along.

"And such a night they take the road in
As ne'er poor mortal was abroad in."

Down poured the rain. MacAskill viewed the excited elements with composure.

But for the rain he would have been delighted, for he had a keen relish for the awful and sublime. He asked his friend if he would like to call anywhere. His friend said that he would rather go home. "All right," said MacAskill, "but as I see you are getting tired, come on my back, I'll carry you."

His friend laughed an objection, but our hero insisted. So after a few moments our hero was walking swiftly along with his friend perched on his back.

The lightnings flashed, the electric bolts shot zigzag where something was scented to devour, the thunder rolled; but MacAskill was not alarmed. He told his funniest yarns.

When within a mile of home his friend remarked that he had recently heard that a friend of theirs was sick in Texas, adding that enquiries ought to be made whether he was out of money, etc.

MacAskill was touched. He became silent at once. Absorbed by the sad news, he unconsciously let his friend slip off his back. His friend said nothing, but walked on behind.

Not until our hero had got home did he think of his burden. His friend, though weighing one hundred and ninety pounds, was in the matter of weight so triffling to him that his back never missed him.

His friend soon arrived, and after both had a sumptuous repast, they went to bed, and were up again hale and hearty in "the morning early."

The round trip, sixty miles, was quite a distance to walk, but our hero did not mind it. Had he a distant errand to perform the next day he would gladly go. He was so strong, and his step so long, that a hundred miles a day would not cause him serious fatigue.

CHAPTER XIII.

He Shakes Hands in Dead Earnest.

Now—here's a hand, my trusty friend,
And gie's a hand of thine,
And we'll take a cup of kindness yet
for old land syne.

One day at the time when MacAskill's fame was dawning, a renowned fighter put in his appearance, MacAskill soon suspected something, but made no remarks. He entertained the stranger in true Cape Breton style. This reminds one of Roderick Dhu's attitude towards his illustrious guest, James V. of Scotland, when they met in the wilds of that "home of the happy." At length the question arose, is this burly stranger going to perpetrate a miniature Glencoe massacre in St. Ann's? At length the suspicious case requested our hero to fight him. MacAskill remonstrated with him, told him that pugilism was an abomination, and fraught with evils many. But the stranger persisted, and charged our hero with cowardice. The latter at last said, "all right, my friend, but let us shake hands." Well, dear reader, they did shake hands. Alas for the stranger, I suppose he "never smiled again." MacAskill squeezed the unfortunate man's hand, which caused the blood to

flow freely through the tips of the latter's fingers. This stranger was, of course, more fortunate than Sir Henry de Bohun who tried to assassinate King Robert Bruce at Bannackburn. Yet, it is probable that he never thought of his adventure with MacAskill without a sense of shame and fear. However, he retreated hastily from St. Ann's, well convinced as Britannia rules the waves, Cape Breton rules the earth in the realm of muscular strength.

Not long after this event, another man came to see MacAskill; nay, not only to see him, but to wrestle with him. As before, our hero was loath to wrestle or to open hostilities for fame or curiosity. His mighty heart was brimful of charitable humanity. He invariably held that men ought not to wrestle, fight and such like without plausible reasons. He recognized the principle which Burns thus set before us:—

"Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentlier sister woman;
Although they go a trifle wrong,
To step aside is human.
One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving why they do it;
And just as lamely can you mark
How far perhaps they rue it.
"Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us;
He knows each chord, its various tone,
Each spring—its various bias;
Then at the balance let's be mute,
We never can adjust it;
What's done we partly may compute.
But know not what's resisted."

But when he saw the impossibility of convincing his would-be antagonist of the barbarity of wanton wrestling, fighting, etc., he got hold of him. Near by there was a woodpile fully ten feet in height and twelve feet in width on top. As already said, MacAskill got hold of the man and threw him over the woodpile. Yes, though he weighed over three hundred pounds, he was sent whistling over that

woodpile, describing a curve like a projectile fired from a mortar.

This stranger was a United States sea-captain. Some of his crew met him on the beach on his departure from MacAskill's. Their boat required some ballast, and they proceeded to take stones and rocks, therefore off MacAskill's farm. Our hero said nothing till they were through. Thereupon, he lit his pipe and strode leisurely down to the shore. The boat was put to sea, and had moved out above one hundred feet when our hero got to the shore. "Say captain" says MacAskill, "get back here with those stones and rocks you took."

"What do you want them for." said the captain, It "matters not," said MacAskill, "but it was a dirty mean trick to take them under the circumstances without my permission."

"I will not send them back," responded the captain, "but if you go out again to my vessel, you will stand a show to get them."

MacAskill seized a stone and threw it at the boat. The one stone damaged the boat so much that the captain judged it was better to surrender in time. The boat rowed back and the captain and his men were obliged to put each stone and rock exactly where it was before, while our hero superintended the work with a beaming countenance which showed the appreciating by-standing boys of St. Ann's how highly he was amused with the captain's humiliation.

"The sun had now gone out of sight
Behind the mountains tall;
And on the same around his feet
The dew began to fall."—Malcolm H. Gillis.

And now the ballast episode being over, MacAskill walked home, meditating with wonder on the vanities and follies of some men. His home that night was crammed with eager visitors who came to congratulate him. Soon the sound of choice music from violin and bag-pipe rose over the sweet and delicious music of happy voices. "Eyes spake love to eyes that

spake again". The dance begins. The celebration was a success and a delightful one.

Such were the early days of MacAskill. Such were his exploits. How pleasant to reflect on the fact that as an exceptional man, he was timely recognized and appreciated. His recognition and appreciation by his friends and countrymen was to him an ample reward for wisely using his muscular superiority. Of him it cannot be said:

"He who is truly wise or great
Lives both too early or too late."

CHAPTER XIV.

He goes to a Frame-Raising.

"Then let us pray that come it may,
And come it will for all that;
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be and all that."—Burns.

The Cape-Bretonians are far-famed for their unanimity, and for the strict observance of the Golden Rule. If a Cape Bretonian happens to need assistance of any kind, he has only to undergo the ordeal of making his wants known.

Their unanimity has proved a general blessing. The merits of unanimity were well illustrated once by an old man. He was contemplating the matter of embarkation to eternity which was "too, too soon" to be inevitable, and before leaving he desired to give his family an object lesson, the last of many, which would crown all the rest. He got a few sticks, put them together, side by side, and tried to break them across his knee. Having failed he took the sticks separately and broke them easily. "Now, my dears," he said "there is strength in union, and if you practice unanimity you shall be much more apt to succeed." Shortly after he died. His family observed his counsel and the result was that they became the leading men of the place, "with wealth at their will."

The absence of unanimity has retarded the progress of nations. It had something to do with the failure

of Charles Edward Stuart (Bonny Prince Charlie) Yes, dissensions retarded the progress of Scotland, Ireland and England. Even in our great Dominion of Canada, dissensions, political and otherwise, have sometimes proved very embarrassing.

Not so in the island of Cape Breton. What dissensions we have had owed their origin to varied opinions respecting the means to be employed for certain praiseworthy ends. As all parties were sincere, and meant to do good, and did good, these superficial tempests were almost essential constituents of unanimity.

A discreet quantity of word warring strengthens the right. The difficulty is to gauge ourselves at the proper time. The philosophy of the benefits of opposition suggested in the preceding sentences is something that only one in two thousand have learned.

Those who have not time to study large books on this philosophy can proceed in another way. Let them watch and observe discussions. As a rule they will find that the results of discussions where all thought and spoke alike are always weak.

But to our hero. A neighbor of his was to have a barn frame raising on a certain day. As customary in such cases, he requested his neighbors to "give him a lift." The call was promptly and cheerfully responded to by the arrival of sixty or seventy men, Angus MacAskill among the rest like a lighthouse among lamp-posts.

The frame was not quite ready, and MacAskill peeled off and went to work with the big augur. As he worked he noticed that the crowd were getting "unco happy", and the breath of the first man that came in close proximity to him reminded him of a rum distellery. That was enough. He understood that for some reason he was to be neglected that day by the frame owner. He said nothing. He was not very fond of strong drink anyhow, but he was none the less insulted at heart.

The frame was raised, and ready for the rafters when the dinner bell rang. MacAskill loitered behind, and when the rest had entered the house he

went to the frame, climbed up, and lowered one of the side plaits, a stick 60 ft. x 8 in., put it on his shoulder, and walked off with it. He made for the sea-shore, which was about four hundred yards away, and consigned the plait to the Atlantic Ocean.

The splash was heard in the house, but they dared not go to ask for explanations. Our hero walked away satisfied in leaving a token of his displeasure.

On his way home he called at a certain grocery store. He asked for a pound of tea. The proprietor said: "Well, Mr. MacAskill, take a handful out of that box, and if it weighs one half of a pound, I'll charge you nothing." MacAskill tried as requested The handful was weighed, and it weighed one pound. The merchant offered him a whole box as a present, but this he politely refused, and went home.

CHAPTER XV.

He Was Not Vain.

As already observed, it was the good fortune of our hero that he was not swayed overmuch by vanity. Of course, he duly appreciated the praise of his admirers but not to excess. On the contrary this power of the mind is essential in the mental organism. But, like the other faculties, it requires Providential grace for its suitable enlivenment and a grace-pervaded reason or understanding for its guidance and moderation. Given these akin to essential requisites, vanity is a treasure.

Some of the greatest men had a seasonable dash of vanity. Where is the young man that would not face astounding odds for the sweeten comiums his darling can bestow upon him? Where is the man, young or old, who would not fight and die for his country with joy, if he were confident that his name would be placed on the list of heroes, to be honoured for all time. They have not been born—at least in Cape Breton Island.

However, as already intimated, MacAskill was not a slave to vanity, nor to any other passion. But by

the way, it is gratifying to know that his great size, and strength, by no means, a brake on his contentment. He took as lively an interest in himself, as a natural prodigy, as others took. It is said that "it is a wise boy that knows his own father." Very good, but wiser still is he who knows himself. MacAskill wisely endeavored, discretly, of course, to gain an idea of his own exceptional value, so to speak, but in the line of strength he failed, because he never failed, for he never attempted a lift or kindred feat without succeeding with wonderful ease. From the above gleanings the reader, at least after some reflection, can realize the utility of vanity. Harmonizing with the other faculties of the mind, as in the case of our hero, vanity in one sense ceases to be vanity, yet constitutes a whip whose strength or weakness influences man to a high degree.

Our hero often merited and enjoyed the applause and ladies and gentlemen by passing swiftly over the sidewalk with two barrels of salted pork, one under each arm. In getting the barrels under his arms he did not experience much difficulty.

Lifting a hundredweight with two fingers, and raising it till his arm arrived at a horizontal pose, was mere child's play to him. But who else could do that. Readers think well. Add to this that he could hold his arm in that position for ten minutes. Even this will convey the idea of his superior strength to permanent conviction.

But not to lower the fame of MacAskill, but to solidify it by fair comparisons, it may be said that two Cape Bretonians, a Neil MacDonald, of West Ainslie, and a John J. MacFarlane, of Upper Margaree (both of them untrained), did something tough too. The former took a weight of 86 lbs. on his little finger and wrote his name legibly at a level with his face. The latter wrote his name at the same height with a 56 pounder suspended from his little finger. These men were but common sized, and did well, but be it said that great as MacAskill's size was, his strength was greater in proportion to his size than that displayed in the above comparison.

CHAPTER XVI.

MacAskill Helps a Friend.

"Courage brother! do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night
There's a star to guide the humble;
Trust in God and do the right."

The hero of this history was uncommonly warm-hearted. The poor and oppressed of his day never appealed to him in vain.

It is a happy fact that the great majority of the world's great women and great men have been in all ages exceptionally charitable and devoid of unreasonable pride and haughtiness. This is worthy of young people's earnest consideration. However, an instance or two will serve to illustrate the truth of what has been above asserted of his warm-heartedness.

Once upon a time, a certain man, humble in circumstances, presented himself at a certain store and asked the proprietor, and acquaintance of his, to let him have a barrel of flour on credit. Times were dull and hence the merchant was the same. He gave the poor would-be purchaser a look of merchantable contempt which meant a positive refusal, but said nothing. Again and again the man made known the object of his call, and told the merchant that his wife and little children were on the verge of starvation. Again and again no answer, save the whistling of the simple and mellow music of "Home, sweet home." At length, however, the merchant spoke out his poser: "I have a vessel down here at the wharf. There are several barrels of flour in the hold. If you throw a barrel out of the hold on deck, a height of twelve feet, the barrel is yours," and warming up with excitement, he added: "Yes, you can have all the barrels that you or any man can throw on deck."

"That's pretty tall talking," said the poor man, "there are lots of strong men in the world."

The merchant was nettled a little mite by the man's sober reply and said, "I defy you to procure a man

in St. Ann's that can do what I have proposed."

The man shrugged his shoulders, thought of MacAskill, and proceeded homeward. His horse was slow, the road bad, and the entire world looked gloomy The future "was ominous and dark." The man, notwithstanding the jolting of the cart, thought of many things. He dreamt of his early days "when his bossom was young." Then he thought of his courtship of the loveliest of them all, and of the many imposing castles he had built in the air before and after marriage. Having come in sight of his home, he espied his wife. He paused, shuddered and wept.

But who happened to come to where he was but MacAskill. He gleamed from the man's woeful countenance that something was wrong. He asked what was the matter. On being told, he said: is "your horse tired?" The man said "No." "Well," said our hero, "let's go back. The distance is not very great." And off they went. Arrived at the store, our hero walked in and told the merchant that he was ready to purchase flour on the "latest" terms proposed. "All right" sang the merchant.

MacAskill and his friend, accompanied by the merchant, proceeded to the vessel. On the wharf there chanced to be a crowd. Each and all of them were eye witnesses to what occurred.

Our hero jumped on board and down into the hold. It then occurred to his cloudless mind that should he throw some barrels on deck they would be smashed. But resolved not to be outdone. He seized a barrel, threw it, up through the hatchway it went, and out splashed into the harbour. Out came another, and another until six were floating. Fortunately none of the barrels collided. Thereupon he helped his friend in removing the barrels to the cart and the two set off for their respective homes.

However, be it said that MacAskill was warmly thanked by his friend, and applauded by all the bystanders, the merchant included. Little by little his friend whom he had so practically helped and indirectly encouraged, improved in the science and art of success. Twelve years afterwards he was

quite well to do. Before his death he had several hundred dollars in bank, and his descendents today are reputed among the higher rural class, socially and financially.

CHAPTER XVII.

MacAskill Likes Fishing.

Fish and fishing; where are the eyes that do not sparkle at the mere mentioning of these two musical words. How many happy recollections "flow gently" into the memory. Fish and fishing, "go where you will on land or on sea," these suggestive words, in whatever language spoken, awaken thoughts which never fail to benefit the mind if not your general worldly interests.

Fish and fishing illustrate or illustrate more and better morals than Aesop's fables. The credulity of some fishes, shows the folly of extreme credulity. The imperative painstaking of the fisherman proves the necessity of taking pains in what is to be done before success may be expected. If the reader be a keen observer and thinker, and a person of force, he or she may derive pleasure, recreation and benefit, from a thorough consideration of fish and fishing But a warning note may not be amiss. It is dangerous to think too much on such matters—half an hour in the afternoon is sufficient.

River fishing or angling is very attractive. It is particularly so to veteran anglers. The new beginners' occasional plights are lovely described by the great author, Washington Irving. Irving humourously remarked that he hooked himself instead of fish, etc., etc., and his comments are so true to life that a person almost fancies that Irving and his associates are all present well equipped, and, moreover, in imagination, you can almost hear the river of his angling experiences thundering by.

But the accustomed angler's success is an effectual balm for the troubles occasioned by the obstacles he or she needs to surmount. And again a veteran

eludes many stumbling blocks.

It may be here remarked that among the best anglers of Cape Breton Island, the following gentlemen are classed:—

Angus J. MacFarlane, Upper Margaree; Dan Hugh MacFarlane, Upper Margaree; Kenneth P. MacKay, Rear, Scotsville; John P. MacKay, Rear, Scotsville; Donald B. Gillis (carpenter) Upper Margaree; John MacLellan (John's son), S. W. Margaree; Alex MacDougall (Archd's son), S. W. Margaree.

The second named one is generally reputed to be a prodigy in the science and art. He is not over fifteen, but was trained by his father, first above mentioned.

Angling is generally pursued for pastime, but salt sea fishing for satisfying hunger and for profit. Sea fishing is vastly important. Millions depend on it, and thousands fish who hate the work, in a manner, but like in other respects because it is the most beneficial industry that lies within reach of their grasp.

Angus MacAskill's favorite amusement and employment was sea-fishing. During the entire fishing season, save when there was a rush of farm work, the dawn of morning opened her beaming eyes to see him in his boat. Early rising, as a rule, is advisable in all walks of life, and it is very necessary for the fisherfolk. It is not necessary to name the principal reasons, for, if you fish, you will soon find out these reasons for yourself, and if you don't fish, you need not be very concerned therewith.

But MacAskill was an exceptionally early riser—first out of bed, and usually the first to go to bed. He took his dinner with him in a satchel; and sometimes a newspaper, book or scribbling book to while away his leisure moments.

He always hated a second-hand or wrecked boat. All the boats he ever had were good ones and large. He usually manned his boat alone, sitting on the stern thwart, of course, rudder in hand. Before the mast was placed a ballast, a precaution which the weight of our hero seated at the rear rendered essential. Only

for this ballast the boat would turn a quarter of a summersault, which would make things rather uncomfortable.

Things that were bettered by painting he made a point of keeping painted. So his boat was not neglected in this respect.

In fact, St. Ann's has seldom, if ever, seen a better fisherman than MacAskill. He cleared a crisp handful of ten dollar bills every year.

When the season was over, he would cart the boat and all his fishing gear to a house expressly built for the purpose. Then he would take up some other work until the "airy wheels of time" a five month's course "had driven."

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Fishing Boat Exploit.

The fishing boat exploit of our hero is a household tale in St. Ann's. But there are either two versions of the same exploit, or there are two sister exploits. For that matter, it differs nothing, as one thing is certain, viz., "something was attempted, something was done," and that something was prodigious in the extreme. The two versions are here subjoined, the former was related to the author by John A. Morrison of South Gut, St. Ann's.

Our hero's favorite pursuit was fishing. One day he was alone in and about his boat, in the evening, as he came to the shore, he helloed to the other fishermen to come and help him in with his boat. They soon arrived. One of them secretly proposed that they should push and haul the boat over a hill into a neighboring pool, and leave MacAskill to get it out of there at his leisure. The crowd was a large one, and sure of success. No one breathed the secret to MacAskill. They seized the boat, and up it goes, MacAskill walks by the shoulder of the boat pulling reasonably strong. When the boat arrived at high water mark, MacAskill said "that will do, thank you." They pretended not to hear him, and up the

boat goes, but not very far; MacAskill perceived the trick at a fiash, and placed his shoulder to that of the boat. Crack, crack, crack, and the boat is torn apart.

The crowd fled, but our hero grabbed one, and threw him disdainfully up in the air, where he described an arch or semi-circle, landing twenty feet away, more dead than alive with fear and pain.

The second version, or sister exploit (as the case may be), words substantially as follows:—

One lovely twilight, our hero and his friends had just come ashore. In their fishing fleet was one boat of extra weight. The hauling thereof to a safe altitude defied a crowd of brawny veterans. MacAskill was requested to help. Up he came and caught hold. His companions just for fun hauled back with all their strength; MacAskill soon noticed the joke, and decided to have a joke of his own. He gave a ponderous pull, the boat was torn in two from stern to prow. He carried his half as far as he pleased, and threw it aside. His companions were dumfounded with astonishment. The owner of the boat was quite satisfied. He said that he preferred seeing that exploit than the best boat that ever graced the smiling waters of St. Ann's.

It is said that thereafter St. Ann's men who were given to jokes, tricks, and such like carefully avoided experimenting on Angus MacAskill. On this, and on other occasions, had he been very ill-natured, there had been a tragedy.. What would an ordinary citizen be in his vice-like grasp?

The boat exploit would be a very choice subject for a poem. Possibly the day will arrive when one of our poets will weave a wreath of poetry about that boat, a large, lettered wreath so worded as to spell the immortal name, Angus MacAskill.

CHAPTER XIX.

MacAskill Goes to the United States.

Mr. C. H. Campbell, of Riverside, California, is right when he says in the "Family Herald" and

"Weekly Star" and "People's Popular Magazine," as follows in the next paragraph:—

A man from New York visited Cape Breton in 1849, and, meeting Angus MacAskill, asked him to go with him, which he consented to do. He engaged him for five years, and they travelled through Canada, the United States, and part of Europe.

He was now twenty-four years of age. After a thorough preparation for his travels, and for his absence from home, he proceeded to bid his friends "a sad and heart-warm fond adieu." He was deeply affected, but could not restrain his surprise at the genuine sorrow manifested by one and all. Not till now did he dream that he was exceptionally beloved.

A large crowd escorted him to the shore, where a boat was waiting to convey him and the New Yorker to the vessel.

After further leave-taking, his comrades sadly directed their steps homeward. That was a sad evening with them. That was a sad evening at St. Ann's.

The late poet, Alfred Tennyson, has aptly and wisely said:

"I hold it true whate'er befall:
I feel it when I sorrow most:
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all."

Nevertheless parting with one we love is very trying. It is exceptionally hard to bear. Sorrow for absent loved ones has sometimes caused death. It may be proper here to remark in all sincerity that the best thing to do in time of sorrow, ordinarily speaking, is to go to work and to work hard. This antidote or cure does not involve the least disrespect of those whose absence we regret.

Acting on this or a similar maxim of equanimity, our hero's friends soon busied themselves with their usual employments. Before long the welcomed letter arrived from MacAskill. Here is a fac-simile thereof:

Quebec, P. Q., 8th July, 1849

Dear Brother:—I arrived here safely. The voyage was rather rough, but no accidents occurred. What I have seen of Quebec excells my expectations.

I was rather lonely during the passage, though I had a plentitude of suitable and congenial company.

My friend, the New York man, is very agreeable. But, notwithstanding, I often reflect o'er the memory of the days which I passed with my friends of bonnie St. Ann's.

"Scenes of woe and scenes of pleasure;
Scenes that former thoughts renew;
Scenes of woe and scenes of pleasure,
Now a five years sad adieu."

In conclusion, I think I'm safe in saying that my homesick melancholy it "evanishing amid the storm" and bustle and furore my bodily size here occasions.

I am, your fond brother,
ANGUS MacASKILL.

It is superfluous to add that this letter, though brief, was a source of consolation and congratulation.

Our hero wrote often to his friends, and dwelt long on themes which he judged interesting to them. As this knowledge is obtainable from standard books on travel, etc., it is not necessary to reproduce it here.

Ere long, the New Yorker procured him an unco' comrade. This was Tom Thumb, a miniature phenomena, yes, the smallest full-grown man that ever lived. Tom Thumb was a fair dancer, and MacAskill would hold out his right arm and with the other he'd hoist Tom Thumb to the palm of his right hand. Here Tom Thumb would dance as merrily "as you please." Thereupon MacAskill would sometimes throw him into his pocket.

Tom Thumb was quite a joker. He'd put up his hands in boxing attitude sometimes, and challenge MacAskill to fight. This used to amuse MacAskill very much.

The chief towns of the provinces were visited in due time. The New Yorker often remarked: "the

day I met MacAskill has proved to be a red-letter day in my life. My fortune is made, and moreover, he is such good company.

As railroads were not so plentiful then, they travelled much in coaches, but the roads being smooth their journeys were attended with comfort.

CHAPTER XX.

MacAskill Travels Much.

Our hero spent a short time in Cuba. It was then the depth of winter but the weather was still uncomfortably warm. He was not very favourably impressed with Cuba. But as he said himself, if he had seen more of Cuban scenery, probably he might find something to admire.

He was not accustomed to travel very much about the places at which he and his employer called, at least until the rush to see him was over. Were he to perambulate around, few only would pay a dollar to see him thereafter as one good look at him would satiate curiosity to a bearable extent.

In the course of his travels, he met a man who was as tall as he himself, but almost as slender as a child. This man could walk in a dead calm, but the least wind would jeopardise his equilibrium. MacAskill averred that he was quite a sight. In fact, a gale might hoist that man "to the very clouds themselves."

He saw a darkey woman who was nearly as big as himself. Yes, she was almost his peer in height stoutness and weight. As to her strength, there is nothing recorded thereabout.

We can easily conjecture that our hero saw many strange sights. Just fancy how delightful to spend a day in his company. Of course, be it said, that conversing over his reminiscences was no hobby of his. But, if courteously requested, he would willingly tell many stories of what he saw.

It may be remarked here that on his foreign tour he posed as a prodigy of size, not as a prodigy of strength. This was discreet, for had he chosen the

latter, it might end very sadly. Hence, it was that he tried his strength but seldom during this undertaking.

He enjoyed his travels very much. He was not bashful and, under the gaze of thousands of spectators who came expressly to see him, he would stand up and walk around without evincing an iota of excitement.

No one ever went to see our hero to return disappointed, except in another sense of the word. They were usually agreeably disappointed. Yes, disappointed, the right way for them he was a greater show than they usually expected. This reminds one of a western man who got sick and came east soon recovered in our health-giving climate, and went back, as the papers chronicle, happily disappointed.

It does not belong to this book to give our hero's "tales of travel" in full. But what has been stated will serve as a fitting sequel to the rest, which was not for the most part less interesting.

Many of St. Ann's ladies and gentlemen can recall with pleasure, mellowed with a little sadness, the happy days they used to repair to our hero's home to listen to his marvellous stories.

CHAPTER XXI.

He Verifies Reports About His Strength.

The people of the United States, generally speaking love their country and their countrymen to a remarkable degree. This is not unreasonable, for their country is a great one, and they, have and have had their great men. But some Americans go so far as to ignore the idea that there are countries and men in other longitudes and latitudes as great as theirs.

The above remark is intended to warn the reader to be cautious in weighing the patriotic effusions of our friends "over the border." Let the Canadian study neutral statistics, and then decide for himself about the comparative greatness of the United States.

However, during our hero's sojourn in the United States, a friend of his and some Americans had a lively war of words about our hero's strength. Our hero's friend was none of those sturdy Cape Bretonians who say their say where they please, regardless of danger. Like Galcagus he possessed some of that stuff of which heroes are made. With his back to a brick edifice, gracefully posed, manly sounding the praises of MacAskill, he would remind one of James V of Scotland, as depicted by Scott, exclaiming:

"Come one, come all, this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."

At length the crowd dispersed, the greater number of them going into a wholesale liquor store near by. This friend of MacAskill's walked down the street Turning a corner, whom did he meet but Angus MacAskill. It was a pleasant meeting. MacAskill was betimes told of the doubters. "Never mind." he said, "let us go to the store, and I may have a chance of impressing upon them the truth of the adage "seeing is believing."

They arrived in the store. The crowd was still there. On seeing MacAskill, some of them fearing violence visibly trembled.

Our hero called for a drink for "all hands." While the rest were leisurely enjoying theirs he stepped over to a puncheon of Scotch Whiskey, containing one hundred and forty gallons. He lifted it on end. Then he struck the head a rap with his knuckles. The bung flew out and made skyward. Whereupon, he raised the puncheon, as if it were a jar, and drank to the health of the bystanders. Whether the drink was a large one or not is not known; it has not been recorded, but at least it was taken on the wholesale principle. However, having quaffed his, he paid for "all hands" and walked out.

The Americans of this episode were more than convinced, and declared that he ought to run for Congress, while the satisfaction of MacAskill's friend can only be fancied by those who had been repeatedly tantalized in a foreign land.

This achievement soon spread like a priarie fire never to die, and is listened to today in Australia and other parts by thousands of British descended people with a zest equal to our own.

CHAPTER XXII.

He Visits Queen Victoria.

In this world of ours, few exactly agree as to what character constitutes the ideal ruler. Perfect women and men are scarce. Hence the most loyal,, not without reason, sometimes criticize their chief ruler rather unfavorably.

Again, and probably for the best, people differ in the nature and in the extent of deferential feeling towards their ruler. For instance, members of the British Empire are, as a rule essentially loyal to The Queen, but few from the same motives. Some are loyal through personal affection, some through a love of the Queen's royalty, some through fear, some through appreciation of the Queen's policy, and others are loyal because they judge that, to an important extent, loyalty to the Queen is loyalty to themselves and to their interests. The last motive is decidedly the best. All men are born equal. Every woman and every man have a perfect right to be loyal to themselves, and, more than that, it is their duty to be loyal to themselves. This granted, it goes without saying or demonstration that, if loyalty to a chief ruler is subversive to one's own interests, it is his or her duty, if opposed by the Throne, to seek and obtain redress or to hie to a less oppressive banner.

The idea of regarding chief rulers with great awe, sense of danger, etc., is erroneous. Should it come to the crisis that innocent men would be lawfully supposed to quake in presence of their ruler, surely any lady or gentleman could discern that there "was some rottenness in Denmark." Yes, readers, and remem-

ber that sovereigns are servants of the people, and are only to be honoured for the trust reposed in them and for their beneficial or praise-worthy services or achievements.

Loyalty should ever be governed by reason. The great people of the world afford ample examples. Artemus Ward, for instance says, "bully for the national sentiment," but we cannot shout worth a cent on empty stomachs. The East Indian members of the Biritsh Empire could say likewise a year ago, when they were perishing in thousands, while millions of dollars were being spent in other parts of the empire in the name of loyalty.

Speaking of extreme loyalty reminds one of a certain servant. His master did an extensive business and kept a ledger whose statements were sometimes doubted. When a customer was settling his account, should a dispute arise, the servant was at once telephoned by his master, when the following dialogue would take place:—

"Hello!"
"Yes, sir."
"Will you swear to this?"
"Yes sir,; yes, what is it?"

But reverting to the character best fitted to rule, we are many. As already said, few of us exactly agree on that point. But our noble Queen Victoria is truly great and possessed of the dignity that becomes her charge as well as with that humility that endears her to us, so that the attitude of one and all towards her is like that of his flock to Goldsmith's village preacher.

Queen Victoria is a great personage. That she is a queen adds not much to her splendour. For, in the words of Shakespeare, the king of dramatic poetry:

"My crown is in my heart, not on my head;
Not decked with diamonds and Indian stones,
Nor to be seen. My Crown is called Content—
A crown it is that seldom kings enjoy.

But enough. However, be it announced that Her Majesty Queen Victoria invited Angus MacAskill to Windsor Castle. He soon called upon her. She gave him a cordial reception. She chatted pleasantly with him for a few hours.

She was highly interested in his great size, and complimented him very warmly. She presented him with two rings of gold.

MacAskill regretted that there were no means of showing his power of lifting, but he thought of a plan to leave a token of his strength on the sly. He walked back and forth before the Queen, secretly pressing the carpet with his heels. When he left, the carpet, though thick and strong, was cut here and there in the bread cutter fashion, by the heels of the giant.

The Queen said afterwards that he was the tallest, the stoutest and the strongest man that ever entered the palace.

MacAskill was well pleased with his visit. Yet he was not intoxicated by the honour, but preserved his wonted composure. 'Tis true, her kindness increased and enlivened his love for her, yet there were others he loved best, loyal as he was. Chief among those were his parents and his brother and sister.

Still our hero was a model of loyalty, but, in ordinary matters, with him "the man was the gold and all that."

CHAPTER XXIII.

He Goes to Edinburgh.

Our hero's visit to Edinburgh interested him very much. Edinburgh is brimful of interest, not mere curiosity, but genuine sensible interest. There one may see plentous tokens of the varied trains of thought, study and activity which have prevailed in the ages that have been. If there be "a whim-inspired fool" who supposes that the Scotch have been uncivilized in any age, let him go to Edinburgh. There,

the mist which constitutes such a supposition will be dissolved forever by the light of revelations which convince.

Before proceeding further, it may not be amiss to refer to one of Scotland's giants and heroes, Sir William Wallace. This was an "extraordinary man." Historically, it is not very long since Wallace lived and died, yet a great many lies have been manufactured about him. Jane Porter wrote a novel called Scottish Chiefs, in which Wallace figured, and strange to say some suppose that novel to be a true story. Jane Porter is not to be blamed for this, I presume, but it is a recognized fact and a happy one that the truth about Wallace is more interesting than the brightest inventions of fiction, and it is to be regretted that such an able writer as Jane Porter did not write a true life of Wallace in addition to her famous novel, Scottish Chiefs.

Sir William Wallace flourished in the thirteenth century. He was uncommonly stout, tall, heavy, muscular, strong, brave and full of life. His patriotism will be remembered with undecreasing appreciation while time exists.

Among the first exploits of Wallace was the killing of a few English armed warriors. The Scotchman's only weapon was a fishing rod.

It may be remembered that in these days the English kings strongly desired to rule Scotland. Wallace from the cradle up was strongly opposed to English rule. Some of the English soldiers and sentinels sent to Scotland were too haughty and insolent, hence the episode recorded above.

Wallace marshalled an army in due time, and was very successful against the English. In 1297, at the famous battle of Sterling Bridge, he utterly routed the English Governor of Scotland. "Soon not an English soldier remained north of the Tweed, and Wallace was elected Governor of Scotland."

"For eight years, in spite of the coldness and jealousy of the nobility, he ably maintained Scotland's cause. At last he was betrayed by a false friend, and hanged in London in 1305 A. D."—See Brief

The King of France once requested Wallace to cross over with a few officers to help him against a certain country. Wallace consented. He and a nephew of his and a few more soon went aboard a ship and sailed. Soon the red sails of the fleet of a well known sea pirate hoved in sight. He was known as the Red Rover. The captain was shocked. Wallace said, "fear nothing." Wallace asked the captain if he knew the Red Rover.

The captain said "yes." Wallace said "describe his appearance." The captain said "he's a great big man about your size, and as a distinction wears a red woolen coat over his mail. Moreover he is usually the first man to jump aboard the prey." "That will do, said Wallace, "you and your men go and hide." Then he ordered his own men to go down below except his beloved nephew, Wallace and his nephew paced the deck, waiting for the Red Rover.

They had not to wait long. In jumped the red Rover, Wallace grabbed him, and, ladies and gentlemen, that was a tussle. Soon the Red Rover's heels described a semi-circle in the air; down comes the Red Rover on his face on deck. Wallace seized him by the back of the neck and knocked the deck with his mouth. Who are you? gasped the pirate. "I am William Wallace of Scotland" was the reply. "And the strongest man I ever met," said Red Rover. "But I'm your man now and henceforth" added the Red Rover. He was as good as his word. He bravely fought under Wallace in France, and afterwards in Scotland, and was one of King Robert Bruce's right hand men at the battle of Bannockburn.

The sword of Wallace ranks among the wonders of the world. Nine inches were accidently broken off the top. The two parts may be seen in Edinburgh. The sword was seven feet in length and wide proportionately. Hugh Gillis warden , of Upper Margaree, interviewed two reputable men who actually saw and handled the sword of Wallace. Both men's descriptions exactly agreed. Both these men declared that it weighed forty pounds. After the death of Wallace,

his sword was treasured in Dumbries for hundreds of years. In the reign of good King George the Fourth on the occasion of his visit to Edinburgh, the memorable sword of Wallace, that the King might see it, was taken there, and there it is today.

MacAskill went to see the sword of Wallace. He said he could possibly wield it on the battle-field, but that it was rather big and heavy.

Now, gentle reader, think of the man who could wield it as easily as you could a bayonet. But it is gratifying to know MacAskill was the only man who could swing and brandish it in martial style except the great Sir William Wallace himself.

But a few words about Dumfries City. Here lies buried one of Scotland's intellectual giants, Robert Burns. He was a great poet. Notwithstanding his naturally strong and rebellious passions, he lived a good life, a life of current sobriety, a life of superfluous honesty, and died happily, attended by his wife, bonnie Jean, and by his lovely friend, Jessie Lewyars.

Edinburgh, Dumfries, etc., were visited by MacAskill. The most of them pleased him very much but Edinburgh the most of all.

CHAPTER XXIV.

He Shoulders a Monster Weight.

The anchor exploit of Angus MacAskill was truly wonderful. The author has read and heard more than one account thereof. Of these he will narrate merely two, which, though differing in details, agree essentially. However, the second version given is more authentic, and, in fact, there is no reason to doubt its truthfulness.

The first version says that on a New York pier, there was an anchor weighing twenty-two hundred pounds. MacAskill came here one day and met some French sailors. After chatting for some time, the conversation drifted to the big anchor. The Frenchman had heard before of our hero's strength,

and wanted to see it tested. They said that they knew a giant in France who could shoulder it, and spoke in words as much as to say that a man from St. Ann's, Cape Breton, could not move it. Our hero caught the anchor, shouldered it and poised it on his shoulder with ease, to the surprise of the Frenchmen. They had not expected that. Be it said also that their French giant story was but a fib to trick MacAskill into trying his strength. The author does not intend to try to justify them, but their motives, if dishonest might have been more patriotic than criminal. But sad to say, when MacAskill threw the anchor off, one of the flukes caught in the shoulder region, and shattered his massive constitution forever.

The second version has no French connected therewith. But this is not what makes it preferable but that it is very probably the truth entirely.

To begin, the famous anchor weighed two thousand seven hundred. It was lying on a New York pier. Why it was disused at the time is not now known.

Our hero went to the pier one evening, and for pastime grabbed the anchor, and with startling ease raised it. He did not tremble, his face did not redden. He walked back and forth with the ponderous anchor on his shoulder.

Little did he know "that soon, too soon," his blooming constitution was going to be blighted forever. But it is a good thing that "coming events" do not "cast their shadows before." Were people to know their futures, the knowledge might be, if not always sad, yet a little or more embarrassing.

Our hero as already said paced the pier, and at length tossed the anchor as if it were an ordinary cable, but one of the flukes hooked his shoulder, and wrecked his stalwart frame.

The bystanders all were in tears. He was in great pain for a while. In course of time he improved to some extent.

In another chapter it will be seen whether or not this wrecking accident was so significant to his strength as a miniature accident would be to an ordinary man.

CHAPTER XXV.

Other Giants.

It is quite proper to announce that we have had, and have in Cape Breton, and in the peninsula of Nova Scotia, scores of giants, though none of them could be compared with MacAskill. Some of them have been or are giants of size and strength, others giants in strength alone. We find them descended from various nationalities, Irish, French, Scotch and English.

Neil MacDonald, of Kirkwood, Lake Ainslie, was one of these. In Margaree Harbour he turned a cannon weighing perhaps fifteen hundred, end over end, sommersault so to speak.

His son, Dr. H. N. MacDonald, is one of the ablest athletes in the world to-day. He is as strong as nine or ten men, and full of life and beautiful physique.

Charles MacLear (Alex's son) formerly of Scotsville, was an able-bodied man. He went to Klondyke, but was never heard from, and possibly perished.

John H. Gillis, of Scotsville, is a modern giant of strength. He lifts very heavy weights with surprising ease.

The late John Gillis (Peter's son), S. W. Margaree, was a marvel of strength, and so was Alex. Gillis (John's son), of West Side, S. W. Margaree.

Angus A. MacLellan, of S. W. Margaree, is six feet six inches in height, and weighs proportionately. He performed exploits of which no Cape Bretonian of Nova Scotian need be ashamed. A large spruce log he can handle like a long shingle block.

The MacFarlanes, Gillis,' MacDougalls, MacDonells and Camerons of Upper and S. W. Margaree have and have had giants in their ranks, that would grace a royal guard. These fought too (I do not mean among themselves), and, figuratively speaking, sheathed their swords, but for want of argument.

Broad Cove, Mabou, Port Hood, Judique, Ports Hastings and Hawkesbury, Whycocomagh, etc., have had and have giants.

Margaree Forks, Emerald, N. E. Margaree, M. Harbour, Friar's Head and Cheticamp have their celebrities.

The late Mr. Brussard (Jno. Brussard's father), of Margaree Forks, has had but few equals. One day he hauled a plough by the side of an ox for six hours. The MacKinnons, of East and West Ainslie, will be ever famous. Again at Upper East Ainslie, there is an unassuming man, Allan MacDougall by name, who if attacked would prove to be a terror.

Again, L. E. MacLean, Black River; Charles L. MacDonald, of Kirkwood, Lake Ainslie, Allan MacQuarrie, of Loch Ban, Michael Kennedy, of Loch Ban; Simon MacDonell, S. W. Margaree; Thomas Dunbar, North Ainslie; Ronald MacLellan, Egypt; Donald R. MacLean, Broad Cove Mines, S. W. Margaree; Duncan A. MacLellan, S. W. Margaree; John J. MacDonald, S. W. Margaree; John J. Gillis S. W. Margaree, are all men who grace our island chivalry. Victoria County, is not wanting in fine bodied men. MacCharles and others have wrestled laurels from competitors of high order.

Cape Breton County and Richmond raise stalwart boys too.

Throughout the peninsula (Nova Scotia proper) an exceptionally strong man is not a strange sight.

But a few Cape Bretonians are still mentioned. One of these is the late Allan MacDonell, of Mount Pleasant, Upper Margaree, whom the late Neil MacDonald of Kirkwood, Lake Ainslie, reputed to be the strongest man to lift a weight he ever met, and Archibald Gillis and Angus MacNeil, of Broad Cove, two who will never know to perfection what they can lift and what they can't.

This chapter, far from lessening Angus MacAskill in appreciation, will on the contrary, serve to convince the reader of the truth of what is related of our hero. And, moreover, the modern "instances" are interesting in themselves.

The author, however, apologizes for using some names without asking for consent, but he opines that his friends alluded to are too lenient to criticise this, and much too lenient to criticise "the style in which it's done."—Farewell.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A Trip From Upper Margaree to Margaree Harbour.

The author of this book on being informed that Angus MacDougall, of Margaree Harbour, had worked for Angus MacAskill, set off to interview Mr. MacDougall on a fine October morning.

The sun was just peeping over the Egyptian mountains to smile on Kittarlity, as I directed my steps northward. The landscape views that seemed to present themselves voluntarily to my gaze in close succession were near to perfection, at least if my judgment of perfection be taken as a standard.

The road was soon alive and abustle with girls and boys, horses and buggies, bicycles, etc. Soon a gentleman from North Ainslie, John C. Campbell, sailed along in a horse car. He told me to jump in, and I did. I soon learned that he was en route for Mr. Murphy's with apples.

After half an hour's travel over the smooth road we arrived at Mr. Murphy's. Mr. Murphy was away from home, but none the less I enjoyed my call very highly, and so did Mr. Campbell.

Our hostess (Mr. Murphy's housewife), a beautiful magnetic young lady of excellent disposition, rallied us with pleasing talk and a delicious repast. This over, Mr. Campbell treated us with apples, announcing to our hostess (Miss Ross, at the same time that he was marketing apples, moreover.) The bargain was soon transacted. Mr. Campbell made quite a wholesale that morning; in fact, he sold the entire load, eight barrels, right there and then. While the hired man was removing them to the store-

house, I bade my hostess and Mr. Campbell a fond good morning.

Being in very good humour, I walked briskly, and soon sighted Margaree Forks. Margaree Forks has been so often described that further descriptions are unnecessary. In due time I tipped the door-bell of Hugh Gillis' residence. I was well entertained stayed overnight, and took the road the next morning at "break of day."

About seven o'clock I was at my destination. Mr. and Mrs. Angus MacDougall reside about a mile south of Margaree Harbour town. They are a kindly couple, and soon regaled me with news, ancedotes and a profuse table.

The brandy bottle was produced, but as I declined its intimacy, (being a teetotaler), it was set aside. Talk of hospitality, but they are lovely. In due time I related the object of my visit. Mr. MacDougall took the matter seriously, and was silent and abstracted for an hour or more, and then told his story of MacAskill. In some minor points it differed with my data, but they were essentially identical.

Next morning, "happy be the day," I left for Upper Margaree. My friend MacDougall drove me to Margaree Forks. An hour and a half's walk brought me to S. W. Margaree. I could not resist the inclination to call where I had called in my northward transit, and, in fact, I did not try.

> "I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
> Nothing could resist my Nancy;
> But to see her was to love her,
> Love but her and love forever."

Shortly after noon, however, I was on the road again. Betimes, I was back in Upper Margaree. Though I don't owe my birth to this settlement (being born at Strathlorne), however, as I passed many years here, I may be permitted to say that it is a beauty.

Mountains, glens, rocks and valleys, intersected with streams of becoming size; clearances, houses,

barns, wood factories and forests—all these are here, as it were in semi-careless profusion. The homes of Upper Margaree, so plenteous in wealth and cheer, are generally ornaments that would set off any country to advantage.

Gentle reader, if such scenery be not truly lovely—loveliness upon our earth is surely rare.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MacAskill After His Return and His Death.

Angus MacAskill was well paid by the New Yorker with whom he travelled. Hence, when he came home to St. Ann's he possessed a snug fortune.

He donated respectable sums to many of his relatives and friends. Of course, none of these were poor before, but the gifts of our hero were none the less acceptable, and some of them were appreciated as intensely as Napoleon Bonaparte's gift to Campbell's English sailor.

He filled the role of a second Marc Lecarbot by building two good grist-mills a suitable distance apart. This undertaking proved very profitable.

He was an accomplished miller, and at times ran one of his mills himself. The other was in charge of Angus MacDougall, at present of Margaree Harbour.

It was interesting to see Angus MacAskill, while picking the millstones, hold the pick between his thumb and two fingers. It need not be said that he would turn over the stones with as much ease as a Scotch-descended Cape Breton sonie lassie would turn over a sugar loaf.

As for wheat bags, oat bags, etc., some containing four bushels, they were mere playthings in his hands.

Were the mill brook to run dry, and flour or meal to become scarce, provided that there was grain on hand, he could avert a temporary embarrassment by driving the mill himself. He could easily turn the pit-wheel round for hours, if necessary, or tear off the cogs.

He built an elegant store and stocked it well, and kept it so. He was a reputable business man, honest prompt and agreeable. He sold his goods at a low figure, and thus, though not intentionally, he, like Sir Richard Arkright, relieved the sails of other merchants of some wind. He never admired the credit system, and in business he never encouraged its adoption, yet, he never refused to help a person in need, be he an acquaintance or a stranger.

His ledger, etc., are still extant, and evince a practical knowledge of commercial book-keeping. Yet, to-day, from the fact that L. s. d., are there instead of $ and c., they may appear a little quaint.

At St. Ann's you may see, the great Angus MacAskill's store. There it is, a momento of a glorious past, but unoccupied. How many a heart overflowing with gratitude departed from that store. Our hero and many of his customers have gone to their reward; but are they forgotten? No. And while a vestige of that edifice graces the landscape, it will recall to the minds of one and all, MacAskill's life, MacAskill's charity and MacAskill's philanthropy, and thereby associate our hearts with trains of thought fully as beneficial and enobling as Goldsmith's Deserted Village.

By the way, the doors of the store bear further evidence to our hero's overhead requirements. They are nine feet in height, and his favorite stool is there. What do you suppose it is? It is a 180 gallon molasses puncheon.

It has been already said that the anchor seriously hurt our hero. In fact, his frame was permanently shattered. Possibly his backbone was injured, and probably some of his ribs displaced. He could never afterwards stand straightly erect, and rising from a chair to a standing posture was always a matter of difficulty, and oftimes of torture.

But still his strength was prodigious, a fact which he occasionally manifested. Now and again some people would fancy that his strength was failing down to the ordinary. But ho! my friends, some new exploits would more than dispel these visions.

The anchor exploit already portrayed and his subsequent ones excited more than usual interest because he had had previously a severe fever in Spain. This malady had impaired his constitution forever, and lessened his strength over twenty per cent. Therefore, the anchor exploit may be pronounced doubly wonderful, and his later exploits trebly wonderful.

But, regarding his exploits, they were all astonishing. Hence, all who have heard of them and of their hero, MacAskill, take pleasure in treasuring momentos or remembrances of his strength and size. At Donald McKay's, blacksmith, Scotsville, one of the family, Thomas MacKay, showed me an inner boot sole of MacAskill's. This sole I measured, and its size was not contradictory to my earlier researches About Generva, the poet Rogers began:—

"Reader, if thou should'st come to Modena," but I say, reader, if thou should'st ever come to Scotsville, stop at Donald MacKay's and ask to see the sole mentioned, and you will, and, moreover, receive what Robert Burns desired to receive in Heaven — "a Highland welcome."

However, in August, 1863, Angus MacAskill was seized with that dire ailment, brain fever. The disease set in without any apparent cause.

It is gratifying to know that medical science and art were timely exerted to their utmost to save his life, or, at least, to prolong it, but in vain. Shortly before death, all delirium left him. Indeed, for a few hours he enjoyed sweet tranquility, and conversed with those around him. Yet he was woefully weak, and he thought that the end was near.

On the 8th of August, after a week's illness, he expired as a child falls into a peaceful sleep. The pastor of the place was present. Though confident that his soul was in "the better land," yet all around were in tears.

The news of our hero's death spread like wild-fire Sympathetic messages were received by his sisters and brothers, and were promptly acknowledged.

Notwithstanding the furore caused by our hero's size and strength in the days gone by, so great was sorrow and excitement occasioned and aroused by his death that his most intense native admirers were surprised.

Newspaper after newspaper told the tale of the death of the Cape Breton giant. Encomiums were showered on his memory.

His sisters and brothers bore their affliction with great patience. The sting of death was sore indeed; but they were sensible enough to see that they had many consolations. Our hero had died in their midst "with comforts at his side." His life and death were edifying. These consolations soon relieved and in due time completely healed that horrid wound—the recollection of a friend's death.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Coffin.

After our hero's death, among the first things considered was a coffin. In those times imported coffins were not yet dreamed of. Two reputable carpenters undertook to make the coffin, and they had it completed in six hours.

The coffin was made of native pine boards, as coffins usually were in the days when pine was plentiful. The cover was one-fourth glass.

In size the coffin was a sight of a life time. Yet, so well proportioned was it that it looked uncouth by no means. Yes, it seemed to be smaller than what an actual measurement would attest.

It was costly lined with white cloth. Great pains were taken with every detail. Accomplished ladies and gentlemen thus vied with one another in showing their respect, admiration and appreciation of this extraordinary man.

The exterior of the coffin was lovely. The bright mountings shone out in harmonious contrast with the sober dark ground which they embellished.

In due time the sad task of laying our hero's

remains in their last earthly home was becomingly performed. The lid being replaced, the spectators in dozens paced orderly along once more to gaze "on the face that was dead." Bouquets and wreaths without number were brought along. An aged aristocratic man present who had spent years in Edinburgh said: "I have seen many a coffin; but if this is not the costlies coffin I have seen, it is the most beautiful and the best festooned. These bouquets would do honor to a prince. Never have I seen such genuine and sensible indications of sorrow as MacAskill's mourners have evinced.

The minister of the congregation arrived at the appointed hour. After prayer and scriptural reading he preached an appropriate sermon. His Christian and modest eulogy of our hero will long be remembered.

During the sermon many wept. But ere he had neared the end, the mists of sadness began to dissolve "like the dim fabric of a vision," and when the moment of the benediction arrived, there was not a sad heart in the crowd.

But reverting to the coffin, the reader has probably by this time formed an idea thereof in his or her mind. The beauty of it can be imaged by comparisons or "modern instances." But to imagine its size is very difficult.

It has been said that figures speak. That is a true saying. Yet the actual dimensions of our hero's coffin need not be given, another was of communicating an idea of its size being judged, more easily grasped, and more easily remembered moreover.

Hence, an emphatic illustration is chosen to convey the idea, not at all as a substitute, but as a better medium of this knowledge. Figures may be forgotten, but the following disclosure never.

When the woodwork of the coffin was finished i.e., when it was ready for the dressing, etc., it was found to be sufficient to bear or float three men across the Bay of St. Ann's.

How this has transpired is left to the readers as a matter of conjecture. However, it serves as an

additional argument in support of the far-famed saying "truth is stranger than fiction."

CHAPTER XXIX.

MacAskill's Grave.

On the eastern side of St. Ann's Bay, about a mile and a half from the sea, there is a bonnie cemetery. As you go down by the bay, facing north, it is on your right side. Less than a mile to the south of it, on your left hand side, is one of St. Ann's churches, a magnificent building, with a vane on the top of the spire, which tells the observer there the four fundamental points of a compass, and what's of little less importance "the way the wind blows."

The church referred to above, to aid the stranger in locating the cemetery without asking too many questions. Strangers who are extremely modest like to be spared the odium of asking questions on every side.

Close by the road the cemetery begins. It con tinues quite a distance up a brae or hillside, then curves over to the top of a hill, and you are on the level, and a few yards ahead you observe its western boundary.

In this cemetery the vegetable kingdom is profusely represented. There are elder bushes, cherry trees, raspberry bushes, low wild-rose bushes, and many other beauties of the kind. It reminds one of a passage that we read in Lucy Flemming—that quaint, though happy phrase, "its cheerful graves."

On the upper level of the cemetery, a mount of earth twelve feet in length, artistically set off with gravel, and a respectable gravestone mark the earthly resting place of our hero.

A few feet to the north-east of it are the graves of Mr. and Mrs. Rev. Abraham MacIntosh. Rev. Mr. MacIntosh was pastor of St. Ann's and North Shore. He died on March 10, 1889. His wife's maiden name was Annie Ross. She was born in 1822, and died 1884. There is a becoming paling yard around

their graves. Lastly, there's a suberb monument, which, if not necessary to perpetuate the memory of their virtues, designates to the tourist their cosy abode at the top of the hill of life which, like John Anderson and his wife, they weel "had climbed together."

The breath of St. Ann's cemetery, is as fragrant and sweet as that of a flower garden. As one walks along he is apt to imagine that a costly deoderant has been sprinkled about a few minutes ago.

But let us go back again to our hero's grave and read the inscription so deftly carved on yonder stone. Here it is in toto

"Erected
to
the memory of
Angus MacAskill
The Nova Scotian Giant.
Who died, August 8th, 1863.
Aged 38 years.
A dutiful son, a kind brother. Just in all his dealings.
Universally respected by friends and acquaintances
Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, the end of that man is peace."

Opposite the cemetery is a little sandy island ornamented by a light-house, elsewhere referred to. On the west side of the bay, opposite the cemetery a moderately high and rather steep mountain begins at the water's edge. Here, half a mile or so of the mountain side is still wooded and uninhabited, and exhibits a relieving contrast with the great remainder domesticated by the hand of man.

CHAPTER XXX.

Duncan MacAskill's Description of our Hero.

One of our hero's brothers, an excellent man, Duncan MacAskill by name, when interviewed has had the following to say about our hero's appearance, in

addition to what you have read:—

"My brother's hair was very black and curley. Otherwise he was light complexioned. His face was freckled."

Now, it was a little singular that his hair was very black, while his arms, etc., were light complexioned Yet we meet with such cases now and then. A peculiarity pertaining to a celebrated person glistens more conspicuously. If you meet an ordinary man at a house, or on a train, except in special cases, you don't scrutinize his appearance; but if you meet Sir Charles Tupper, the Earl of Minto, or President MacKinley, or Queen Victoria, all your observing facilities are quickly employed. You scan and mentally analyse every feature, and, if you see any peculiarity, it is never to be effaced from your memory. Hence, it is that we exclaim, "how strange," when told that Angus MacAskill's head was black, whereas his arms were light complexioned.

Can medical science account for all the causes of freckles. However, freckles seldom deduct very materially from a person's beauty. Nevertheless freckles are not desired; but freckle-faced people have this consolation, viz., only snow white skin becomes freckled. With those who work in the sun, the absence of freckles indicates a skin tinged a little like Klondike currency.

Again his brother adds:—

"My brother's facial features were well-proportioned. His mouth was pretty. His lips were fairly thin and rosy. He had a good chin, red cheeks, a well shaped head. His neck was stout and not over long. He dressed 'stylishly' but was not painfully careful in dressing himself."

A glance at his picture will corrobrate these above remarks. We may suppose that Angus MacAskill was handsome. He was a lovely giant. In this, he a real giant, differed from the giants that we are apt to picture for ourselves in our imagination.

'Twas pleasant to see this great big man so gentlemanly in appearance. Of course, his merit and good

character were emphatically more important, but a winning appearance helped to set off the man to better advantage.

Finally, his brother said:—

"When my brother put on the highland costume, which, by the way, was a present from Queen Victoria (not that he was my brother), but he looked like one of those heroes we read of in the ancient chronicles."